

STRAIGHT FROM THE STATEHOUSE



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Governor McGreevey Delivers State of State

In his first State of the State Address today, Governor James E. McGreevey proposed an ambitious plan to improve the quality of life for New Jersey families.

The initiatives unveiled by the Governor will control sprawl and congestion, reform the state's automobile insurance system, build a quality education system, make New Jersey a national leader in cancer care and research and aggressively address public corruption.

"The State of our state is better today than it was yesterday and it will be even brighter tomorrow," McGreevey said. "But if we are to create an enduring quality of life for New Jersey families, then we must stand up and fight for New Jersey's future now."

CONTROLLING SPRAWL

McGreevey said there is no greater threat to our quality of life than the unrestrained, uncontrolled development that has jeopardized waters supplies and made schools more crowded, roadways more congested and open space disappear.

"We must find the will to stop development that costs more than it saves, takes more than it gives and diminishes our lives and degrades our surroundings," he said.

In his remarks, the Governor called for:

- Impact fees so that developers, not local taxpayers, will bear the burden for the cost of added roads and new schools.



- Increased regional coordination to better manage and control growth and development.
- Directing new growth to areas in need of revitalization -- urban centers, older suburbs and rural towns.
- A goal of preserving 20,000 acres of farmland a year.
- Creating and upgrading 200 local parks and adding at least two new state parks.
- Preservation of more open space without increasing bond debt.

AUTO INSURANCE

The Governor called for support of bipartisan legislation designed to make significant improvements in the automobile insurance marketplace, reduce regulations and create more competition.

"We will create more choices to push down rates, empower consumers with more information and demand more accountability from both drivers and insurance companies," he said.

McGreevey also noted that the state has already begun to crack down on insurance fraud and uninsured motorists -- two factors which have been driving up rates for motorists with good driving records.

In addition, the state is aggressively investigating companies that refuse to provide insurance as required by New Jersey law.

PRIORITIES FOR 2003

- **CONTROLLING SPRAWL**
- **AUTO INSURANCE REFORM**
- **QUALITY EDUCATION**
- **CANCER CARE & RESEARCH**
- **FIGHTING CORRUPTION**



EDUCATION

McGreevey outlined several of the state's accomplishments in education in 2002, including placement of reading coaches in 80 schools, the start of the Governor's Book Club and the foundation for an open dialog with educators through regular "Teacher Town Meetings" and other programs.

In the new year, the state will improve the quality of education in New Jersey by raising the grade point average required for teacher certification, insisting that teachers are certified in the subject matter they teach and working with corporate partners to develop high quality summer programs for reading, science and math teachers.

The Governor also proposed alternatives of college level course work, community service and work/study internships for high school seniors who "test out" of required classes.

"We must be prepared to break with past policies and embrace new ideas that force our education system to meet the challenges of the future," he said.

McGreevey also stressed the need to restructure the state's public research universities into a singular world class system.

"We must have the vision to ensure New Jersey's pre-eminence in education, science and technology," he said.

***From day one, we took responsibility
for our future through a series of hard
choices and tough decisions.***

CANCER CARE & RESEARCH

The Governor promised to create new partnerships between government and the health care industry to make New Jersey a national leader in cancer care and research.

Last year, the state invested \$20 million in research at The Cancer Institute of New Jersey, developed a special tumor registry and created SWAT teams to respond to suspected cancer clusters.

"In the next budget, we will build on these investments," he said.

McGreevey also called for passage of legislation to promote stem cell research in New Jersey.

"If we are to cure diabetes or Parkinson's or spinal cord injuries, we must have the courage to promote this research here in New Jersey," he said.

CRACKING DOWN ON CORRUPTION

The Governor outlined a series of actions to aggressively deal with the scourge of public corruption that has tainted too many public officials in New Jersey.

His initiatives include strengthening the Office of Government Integrity, extending the Open Public Records Act to cover the Legislature, tightening disclosure requirements and stricter conflict of interest rules and support for "pay-to-play" reform.

SHARED VISION FOR THE FUTURE

To succeed with the agenda he outlined for 2003, the Governor urged lawmakers to work together and take bold, courageous actions on behalf of the state's citizens.

"If we do this right, for generations to come, the people of New Jersey will look back to this time and place and say that is when our leaders stood up for the people and fought for their future," he said.

"They will say that this was the moment when our leaders pursued a shared vision and their shared obligation to stand up for those who dream of a better quality of life and stood up to those who would destroy it."

